

The British Whig 33RD YEAR.



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FARMERS HAVE A CHANCE.

The Ontario government is casting about for a new minister of agriculture. 'Casting about' expresses the situation precisely. The question is not where a man can be found of progressive ideas or tendencies, of advanced knowledge in farming, of ambition to excel himself in his chosen occupation, and to see his neighbors and fellow-farmers excel. Rather the concern of the government is to find a supporter who, after allowing for a tremendous slump in the vote, may hope to be elected. It is announced that W. T. Allen, of Collingwood, lawyer, is to be the conservative candidate in West Simcoe, made vacant by the death of Hon. Mr. Duff, and he will be opposed by E. G. Drury, of Crown Hill, a farmer, and a son of the late Hon. Mr. Drury. Here will be a contest of some interest, one which the farmers can settle as they like. They have been talking of increasing their lead in the parliaments of Canada. This is one of their opportunities.

With a dictator in the government and a dictator in the press the people of England may have something presently to think about.

SELF-DENIAL CHRISTMAS.

Under the inspiration of the press, and encouraged by the leaders in public life, the people of Britain have arranged to observe the Christmas week as a season of self-denial. The loss of many thousands of lives—the supreme sacrifice being made by representatives of every division of society—suggests a calm and respectful bearing, a feeling that deepens as Christmas approaches.

It did not take any persuasion to induce the masses to accept the anniversary as a time for reflection, for meditation, for self-denial, for the avoidance of all pleasuring, or junketing, and the 'absence of all self-indulgence in material things.'

How susceptible the people are to wise direction? A little while ago they caught the idea of erecting at convenient points the little wooden crosses that reminded them of absent ones, of those who had gone away never to return. The halting steps of passers-by, the bared heads, bespoke the tenderness, the mindfulness, the thoughtfulness, the reverential at home.

This new appeal to the heart is touching, and already the Mother Country has united in its determination to receive, spend, and pass Christmas in the subdued and respectful mood which the press commands. The exhortation is to give, give, give, not for luxuries at home, but for the benefit of those who are serving the country at the front.

The shopping is good. Was money among the masses ever more plentiful than now? Did the merchants ever do a better Christmas trade?

AN ALL-WISE MINISTRY.

The Christian Guardian, and the Toronto World—and the World poses as a political neutral now, and lines up with the church papers as an independent—clamour for a government in Canada of the kind Lloyd George is giving to England, to wit, a national government. The World wants the governor-general, a new man in the country, and with a very limited knowledge of the political situation, to try his hand at cabinet making. 'Let him,' says the World, 'call to his council board the biggest strongest men in Canada, men in who all the people will have confidence, men who would fearlessly

carry on the war with the undivided purpose of achieving success.

Where would the Duke find these men? Are they in political life today? Have they ever been in it? If not, how can they enjoy the confidence of 'all the people'?

The King of Great Britain, who is more successful than the Duke of Devonshire, has not been able to call to his new government big and strong men in whom 'all the people' have confidence. The World, then, is talking nonsense, and this must be very apparent to any student of passing events.

A conservative in Toronto who does not, of course, give his name, suggests that a national government be formed in Canada under Sir Clifford Sifton. He is an organizer of the first rank. But is he not out of politics?

GOVERNMENT VS. COMMISSION.

The Whig has commented upon the very evident conflict which is now going on between the Ontario government and the Hydro-Electric Commission. There has been a jealousy of Hon. Adam Beck which the members of the government have vainly endeavored to conceal. They undertook, in the last session, to settle the power problem so that the Hydro-Electric Commission could not act without their consent. Hon. Mr. Beck was reduced in authority as far as possible.

In the bye-election in Toronto, however, the Beck influence asserted itself. The government was practically ordered to take 'hands off.' The municipalities, which became assertive and troublesome, were assured that no interference could be made with their prerogatives. Later Mr. Beck shook up the governments at Toronto and Ottawa on the Niagara power questions. The great corporations were disposed to fight the commission. They were not willing to sell to it, even under contract, the power it needed at a lower price than it received for power delivered to American consumers. Mr. Beck was very insistent, and had his way.

Then came the appeal to the municipalities to sustain the commission on the Chippewa Creek power, and radial railway schemes. Two of the municipalities balked. They were led to do this, and rumor connects the opposition with the government. Fighting Beck through the municipalities? This could only be the act of desperate men. There is, however, the feeling that the commission is rushing the municipalities into liabilities which may prove burdensome to them; and the municipalities have no representation upon the commission. The consent of the people to contracts, involving an expenditure of many millions of dollars, is necessary, and the expenditure of the money, without any check from the municipalities is objectionable. It is time the municipalities called a halt while they took stock and decided what their course should be.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The council on Monday evening holds its last meeting for 1916. Will it partake of the usual love feast?

The London Chronicle prints from public returns the excess profits which have been assessed by the imperial government, and for the purposes of war. These profits are all larger than they were in 1915.

The Montreal Gazette a pro-German paper? Surely not. It may have its own ideas as to the causes of the war, but there is no question about the loyalty of our contemporary. Some of its recent articles may require explanation.

The federal government should equip in Canada, and at once, a home and school for the blinded soldiers. These should be trained for usefulness, as they can only be in institutions such as the Pearsons have founded in England.

Sir Edmund Walker says that 'for obvious reasons' many of the returned soldiers will take up land. Many will not, or cannot. The average man upon a farm, without training, will make a sorry mess of it. Farming is heavy work, too, and only the physically fit can undertake it.

The power, or terror, of the press was exemplified in the case of Mr. Balfour, who hesitated about accepting office when Lord Northcliffe protested. Mr. Balfour was one of the men he had previously slated for retirement because of his age and incapacity. The foreign office, Lord Northcliffe took it, was no place for a man of that kind.

An Election at Hand. (Ottawa Free Press) The hints of government action regarding the high cost of living are so vague, one would almost think an election was on the horizon.

PUBLIC OPINION

Absorbance in Britain.

The whole resources of the spirit trade, it is believed, will be under state control early in the new year and the accumulated stocks diverted to other purposes than drink.

A Sorrowful Admission.

(Toronto World) Collapse at Verdun had more to do with his peace proposals than success in Rumania. It is a bitter moment for the all-conqueror thus to address his army: 'Soldiers, I have made an offer of peace to the enemy.'

American Fortunes.

(Oswego Times) The income tax returns show that the number of incomes between \$50,000 and \$500,000 has doubled during the past year. The receipts from incomes of \$20,000 to \$50,000 have increased 50 per cent.

Supreme Contempt.

(Orange Sentinel) The most contemptible person in the British Empire to-day is the one who goes about talking of peace while the blood of Belgium is unavenged, and while the Kaiser's slave raiders are depopulating the cities of France. They want peace that rests upon atrocities. The patriot wants peace that rests upon justice.

National Government.

(London Advertiser) Canada needs National Government, with the best men of the whole Dominion called from east and west. The best sentiment in Canada favors such a movement. It is vile that partisanship should hold sway in wartime, a positive crime when the matter is given serious consideration.

KINGSTON EVENTS

25 YEARS AGO

The Christmas rush is on in the stores. A bumper business is being transacted by the merchants. At a large number of citizens signed the temperance pledge at a meeting held in the Opera House by Joe Hess. The men appointed as city firemen will receive \$365 per year.

CONSERVATIVE

VIEW OF THE WAR

(Toronto Mail (Con.)) There are few grown-up Canadians who could not give interesting accounts of this or that military operation, of tragic incidents of the war, and of heroic performances of sons of this Dominion at the front.

Hence it may seem that any apathy there is about the war is not to be set down to want of knowledge. This is an error. We believe the principal cause for the lack of seriousness about the war, for the continued absorption of so many of our people in the pursuit of pleasure and of gain, is their failure to grasp the meaning of the war. No one is ignorant of the struggle that is going on among the Great Powers of Europe, but the knowledge of it that our least concerned people have is hardly better than no knowledge. Some but persons with the heedlessness of insanity could go on in their old selfish ways and at the same time be possessed of the right idea of the

Random Reels

'Of Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax, of Cabbages and Kings.'

THE 5-CENT LOAF

The 5-cent loaf is a once popular article of food which has vanished into space, along with 9-cent gasoline and the resilient bustle. Owing to the great number of Russian prisoners who have been captured while still in the possession of their appetites, the demand for bread in Europe has increased faster than the receipts of a temperance bar at a county fair. This has made it necessary for thousands of people in this country to go without anything that looks like bread, except on Sunday, when they attack the hot soda biscuit and repent in an earnest and heartfelt manner all night.

Until the European war struck its stride a large loaf of bread, containing nourishing qualities and numerous air-holes, could be bought anywhere in this country for the small sum of five cents. One loaf of this bread would sustain a medium sized family for several hours, when served along with such dainties as a pot roast or corned beef

Rippling Rhymes

THE HARDEST JOB

What is the hardest job, you ask—the most excruciating task? Go, ask the sad and heartsick jay who loses an election day. You know how bitterly he fought to get the public snap he sought. For weary weeks he drilled around, wherever voters could be found, and handed hot air to the rabes, and flattered all the hicks and boobies. He spent much coin he could not spare for punk cigars and railway fare, and all the divers odds and ends that statesmen think will gain them friends. He made a long and hard campaign; he toiled around in mud and rain, and talked his tonsils out of whack, and got lumbago in his back. And when election day was done, he found the other fellow won. No doubt when he was all alone, he filled the air with sob and groan, and cursed the voters, in despair, as being clumps beyond compare. But on the street he wore a grin, as though he'd really hate to win. To try and hide one's grouch and bile, behind a large three-cornered smile, to spring a laugh when one would sob—that surely is the hardest job!

PUTTING ON PRES-SURE IN ENGLAND

Mr. Louth, British M.P. Almost two years passed before an enlightened press, led by Lord Northcliffe, succeeded in forcing the Government to introduce compulsory military service. Armchair pessimists predicted the measure would never be accepted by the country since the spirit of compulsion was alien from our character and traditions.

But the people recognized its necessity. The principle which the measure enshrines has without a doubt been accepted by an almost unanimous nation; and that principle holds good for all persons and all services, whether military or otherwise.

I demand for this country what far-sighted Germany has recognized as vital to her existence—compulsory industrial labor. There is nothing illogical or harsh in this demand—nothing that anyone in earnest about winning the war could object to. For surely if it is just and right to compel a man to shoulder his rifle and enter the ranks, it cannot be unjust or illogical to compel another man, better suited for the work, to enter the workshop and fashion the rifle for his brother to carry.

To-day no one in the enjoyment of health should be allowed to continue a drudge upon the nation. Idleness is a luxury the country can no longer afford.

SPEEDING UP BRIT-AIN'S MAN POWER

London Mail. Has the Man-Power Distribution Board recommended an amendment of the Military Service Act, rendering every man up to a certain age, attested or unattested, liable to military service, without right of appeal to anybody other than a military committee? That, in the judgment of all in touch with the recruiting question, is the only possible solution of the problem. It would give equality of treatment and justice to all. It would not favor the 'rich' man's son at the expense of the 'poor,' or the shirker at the expense of the patriot. Why has it not already been done? Can the Government explain?

Sir Douglas Haig must have the men, and the nation will never forgive the Government if it fails to provide them. Are ministers aware that Germany is at the present time mobilizing her entire population, women as well as men, for a gigantic effort next spring; that Italy is preparing to take a similar course; that France is discussing it and asking her Allies to send more men to the front? And what are we going to do? Ever notice how particular a bald man is about the care of his hair? Pleasure before duty means that duty will lose out.

gravity of the Prussian peril. There are many degrees of knowledge that many Canadians have of the dangers our overseas forces are helping to shield us from. So far from setting more careless ones thinking and resolving, the war has scarcely scraped the surface of this consciousness. There will need to be tremendous hardships suffered by many armies, and great numbers of our brave men slain, if our easy-minded stay-at-homes are not to have a rougher acquaintance of the trials of this war than they now dream of.

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Advertisement for Bibbys featuring silk knitted scarfs for ladies and men, boys' overcoats, and boys' knitted toques. Prices range from \$1.00 to \$7.50.

Advertisement for Moore's Electrical Shop, offering everything electrical and Mahogany Parlor Lamps.

Advertisement for Sunkist Raisins, first car new raisins just arrived, available at all grocers.

Advertisement for Ladies' Winter Coats, featuring New York Skirt and Suit Co. with styles for very low prices.

Advertisement for Xmas Necessaries, offering a large stock of boots and shoes before Christmas at the Model Shoe Store.

Advertisement for Olives, featuring stuffed olives with pimentos, celery, and capers, available at JAS. REDDEN & CO.

Advertisement for DALY GARAGE, located at 335 King Street, offering auto supplies and repairs.

Advertisement for WE ADVERTISE OUR COAL BECAUSE IT'S GOOD COAL, featuring a Kodak camera as a Christmas gift and coal from Crawford.